

REMARKS

Claims 1-3, 9-11 and 17-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lawler (U.S. Patent No. 5,758,259) in view of Apte et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,654,739) . Claims 1-3, 9-11 and 17-19 are pending.

On the merits, applicants respectfully submit that the pending claims, as amended, are patentable for at least the following reasons.

The present invention, as recited in amended independent claim 1, teaches a method for generating a recommendation of a program, said method comprising: receiving a first program record corresponding to a first program, wherein the first program record includes at least one key field; retrieving a plurality of program records from a database, wherein at least one of the program records includes at least one key field; converting each key field of the first program record into a feature value; determining a second program record of the plurality of program records that qualifies as a nearest neighbor of the first program record using the feature value and the key fields of the plurality of program records; and generating a recommendation of the first program based on the second program record. Independent claim 2-3, 9-11 and 17-19 recite similar limitations.

Lawler fails to teach show or imply at least the limitations of... converting each

key field of the first program record into a feature value; and determining a second program record of the plurality of program records that qualifies as a nearest neighbor of the first program record using the feature value and the key fields of the plurality of program records, as recited in amended independent claim 1.

The addition of Apte fails to cure the infirmities of Lawler. The Office Action points to col. 1, lines 13-31 to show these limitations. Applicants respectfully note that this section refers to document clustering to improve the effectiveness of information retrieval and other general prior art information retrieval techniques, such as a cosine distance. It does not teach or imply all of the above limitations, as recited in claim 1.

To simply state that the limitations of determining a second program record of the plurality of program records that qualifies as a nearest neighbor of the first program record using the feature value and the key fields of the plurality of program records would be an obvious modification to one skilled in the art begs the question. How? and Why? Such an interpretation disregards the "as a whole" requirement of MPEP 2141.02, and distills the complexities of the actual method of Claim 1 to an abstract general buzz word, precisely the problem obviated by MPEP 2141.02.

For at least the above cited reasons, Applicant submits that independent claims 1-3, 9-11 and 17-19 are patentable over Lawler and Apte.

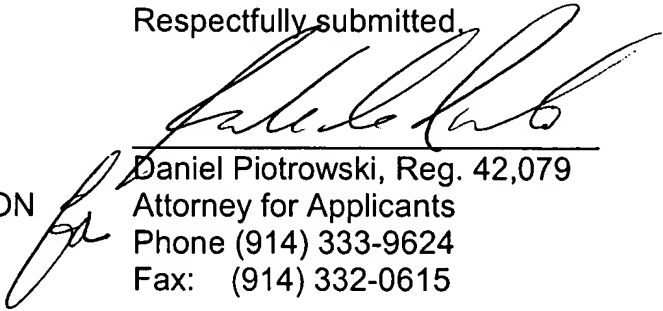
The other claims in this application are dependent upon the independent claims

discussed above and are therefore believed patentable once the independent claims are allowed.

The applicants have made a sincere attempt to advance the prosecution of this application by reducing the issues for consideration and specifically delineating the zone of patentability. The applicants submit that the claims, as they now stand, fully satisfy the requirements of 35 U.S.C. 103. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application are respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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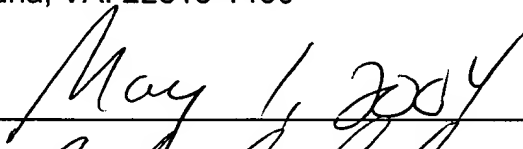
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